



# 2016 SUMMARY REPORT



*The Premier Public Policy Forum for Southern State Legislatures*

## 70<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING *of the* SOUTHERN LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

**LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY**

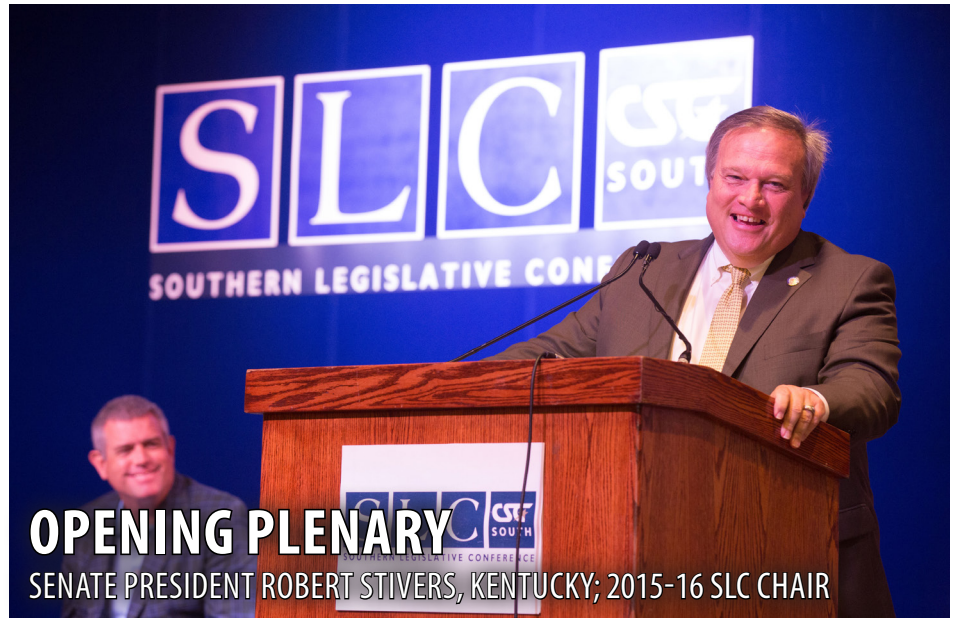
**JULY 9-13, 2016**

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During the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Southern Legislative Conference, July 9-13, 2016, in Lexington, Kentucky, legislators from across the South joined together with policy experts to discuss, review, and consider the opportunities that exist to bring prosperity and promise to states and communities in the region.

The meeting summaries in this report are condensed overviews of speaker presentations provided at policy sessions of the SLC Annual Meeting. Presentations from sessions, where available, can be found on the SLC website at [www.slcatlanta.org/KY2016](http://www.slcatlanta.org/KY2016).





# SLC ANNUAL MEETING TAKES ON HUNGER IN THE SOUTH



\$2,500 were donated to God's Pantry Food Bank to benefit food insecure families in Central and Eastern Kentucky.

Outreach Incorporated, an Iowa-based nonprofit with an enduring mission of providing food, water, medical care and education to millions of children in the United States and in East Africa, remains the SLC's partner in this annual event. The SLC also presented Outreach Inc. founders Floyd Hammer and Kathy Hamilton with a donation.



In May, *Central Kentucky News* reported on a recent *Map the Meal Gap* study by Feeding America, showing that more than one in six Kentuckians were food insecure in 2014, including more than 222,000 children. Since its inception in 2011, *Map the Meal Gap* has transformed the way Feeding America and anti-hunger advocates define and approach the need for food at the local level. By providing critical information about the nature and extent of hunger in communities across the United States, the study equips citizens with the tools to fight for hunger relief where it is needed.

To provide some assistance to food insecure families in Kentucky, the SLC held its sixth annual **SLC/Mark Norris Campaign Against Hunger** food packaging event.

Under the leadership of the SLC chair, Kentucky Senate President Robert Stivers, the SLC, Kentucky Legislative Research Commission and God's Pantry Food Bank coordinated more than 200 volunteers from the local community and attendees of the SLC's 70th Annual Meeting to package more than 80,000 meals for food insecure families. The packaged meals and a charitable donation of

God's Pantry Food Bank was founded in 1955. Their mission is "to reduce hunger in Kentucky through community cooperation making the best possible use of all available resources." This is achieved by coordinating efficient, effective ways for people to meet their basic food and nutrition needs. Sources of food for God's Pantry Food Bank include the USDA, food manufacturers, local produce growers, community organizations and businesses. The Food Bank's network of more than 300 member agencies, including food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters, order the food they need from available inventory through an online ordering system. Agencies choose to either pick up their orders at one of their facilities or from a drop delivery location. Through these partnerships, God's Pantry provides more than 121,400 meals each day for hungry people across a 50-county service area.

# AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE SESSION SUMMARY



**Representative Tom McKee**  
Kentucky  
2015-2016 Chair

## INDUSTRIAL HEMP CULTIVATION

The 2014 Farm Bill cleared the way for states to authorize hemp growth for research purposes. To take advantage of this provision, state policies must be adopted to authorize hemp cultivation. Twenty-nine states have legislation in place supporting industrial hemp research in accordance with the pilot program provision, Section 7606 of the 2014 Farm Bill. Of those states, only nine actively grew hemp as part of the pilot program provision in 2015. An early adopter, Kentucky has emerged as the epicenter of the burgeoning hemp industry.

Kentucky Senate Bill 50 (2013) provides for the definition and administration of an industrial hemp pilot research program. In most states, the land-grant university has assumed the role of administering hemp pilot programs. However, in Kentucky, the pilot project is managed by the state Department of Agriculture (KDA). The Department also is the sole entity licensed by the Drug Enforcement Agency to import live seed for research. The Department establishes and enforces memoranda of understanding with all pilot program participants, which include individuals, corporate entities, and universities. Strict reporting requirements are mandated for all program participants that include all phases of pilot

## SUNDAY, JULY 10

### INDUSTRIAL HEMP CULTIVATION

*Ryan Quarles*, Commissioner of Agriculture, Kentucky  
*Dr. Nancy Cox*, Dean, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment

## MONDAY, JULY 11

### THE TOBACCO MASTER SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

*Warren Beeler*, Executive Director, Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy, Kentucky  
*J. Roger Thomas*, Chair, SLC Agriculture & Rural Development Committee (2000-2002), Kentucky

### ANIMAL WELFARE: BRINGING BALANCE TO THE PROVISION OF CARE

*Dr. Cia Johnson*, Director, American Veterinary Medical Association's Animal Welfare Division, Illinois  
*Senator J. Thomas McElveen*, South Carolina  
*Dr. Robert Stout*, State Veterinarian, Kentucky

research projects. Participants must report GPS-defined locations of projects as well as specific information on planting, harvesting and processing of crops. Additionally, any transport of hemp seed or plants within Kentucky must be pre-approved by the KDA and precisely reported.

The University of Kentucky's research on industrial hemp has expanded annually since the first research trials in 2014, and agronomic trials have increased nearly 10-fold from 2014 to 2016. Current research work includes many scientific disciplines ranging from genetic transformation to the engineering and construction of new equipment for the establishment, culture and harvest of hemp crops. All combined, the University of Kentucky leads the nation in hemp-related research.

### THE TOBACCO MASTER SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

In 1998, the tobacco industry and 46 states reached what is known as the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (MSA), exempting the tobacco industry from legal liability for harm





## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Agriculture & Rural Development Committee re-elected Representative Tom McKee, Kentucky, to serve as the Committee's chair, and Senator Danny Verdin, South Carolina, to serve as the Committee's vice chair for 2016-2017.



caused by tobacco use in exchange for annual payments, in perpetuity, to the 46 states to fund anti-smoking campaigns and public health programs. The industry guaranteed a minimum of \$206 billion over the first 25 years.

Kentucky has emerged as a model for its use of the settlement funds. This is due, in part, to a state statute that required the funds be spent on agricultural programs and agricultural diversification (50 percent), early childhood development (25 percent) and public health (25 percent), allowing the state's agricultural industry to adapt and diversify, even as its largest crop (tobacco) began to decline.

Among other things, Kentucky House Bill 611 (2000) established an oversight committee, the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board, and initiated the formation of the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy. The Kentucky Agricultural Development Board is chaired by the governor and comprises the commissioner of agriculture; dean of the University of Kentucky's College of Agriculture, Food and Environment; president of Kentucky State University; secretary of the Cabinet for Economic Development; and 11 board members appointed by the governor.

Kentucky's distribution of MSA funds has empowered the state's agricultural sector to do more with less. The money has been used as "seed" for investment in production practices, farm innovation, genetics, nutrition and education. Farm cash receipts have nearly doubled since the MSA's inception in 1998.

## ANIMAL WELFARE: BRINGING BALANCE TO THE PROVISION OF CARE

The proper care, treatment, and maintenance of animals is characteristic of a humane society and also crucial to protecting public health. Animal welfare policies and decisions often emphasize one of three attributes: how well the animal functions physically; how the animal "feels;" or how closely the environment or practice being evaluated corresponds to what a wild- or free-living member of the same species might experience. Differences in emphasis can lead to different decisions about the environment or practice even when the same information is being evaluated.

Animals, particularly pets, often require veterinary services, particularly as it relates to population control and public health. While the provision of veterinary medicine by a licensed professional at veterinary clinics is well regulated, in many states, these regulations do not apply to animal shelters. To ensure that all animals receive appropriate and adequate veterinary medical care, states such as South Carolina have sought to enhance animal welfare and bring balance to the regulatory environment.

In that vein, South Carolina Senate Bill 980 (2016) places animal shelters under the regulatory authority and supervision of the state Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners. The Bill also tightens requirements for the dispensing of prescription medication to owners of end-users, expands reporting requirements for animal shelters, and places certain restrictions on eligible locations for mobile clinics.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORTATION & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE SESSION SUMMARY



**Senator Jeff Mullis**  
Georgia  
2015-2016 Chair

## IMPACT OF FEDERAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION LEGISLATION ON THE SLC STATES

The \$305 billion, five-year federal Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, signed into law December 2015, signaled the first time in a decade that Congress had approved a long-term surface transportation spending bill. Not only was this the largest infrastructure bill in American history, it delivered certainty regarding funding flows to states, the construction industry and businesses across the country. Advancing commerce is a key plank in the FAST Act and, toward this end, the National Highway Freight Program dedicates \$6.3 billion to states to enhance goods movement across the entire freight system. In addition, the legislation provides \$4.6 billion to complete nationally significant freight and highway projects across the country. FASTLANE Grants, another important plank in the FAST Act, is a competitive discretionary program designed to enhance freight infrastructure investment across the country. Under this program, some of the allocations to the SLC states include Georgia (Port of Savannah International Multi-Modal Connector at \$44 million); Louisiana (I-10 Freight Corridor at \$60 million); Oklahoma (US 69/75 Bryan County at \$62 million); and

## SUNDAY, JULY 10

### IMPACT OF FEDERAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION LEGISLATION ON THE SLC STATES

*Senator Steve Gooch, Georgia*

*Alex Herrgott, Deputy Staff Director (Majority), Environment and Public Works Committee, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.*

### INGREDIENTS NECESSARY TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Neal Wade, Director, Economic Development Academy, University of Alabama*

## MONDAY, JULY 11

### THE ARTS AND KENTUCKY: CATALYST FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

*Everett D. McCorvey, Ph.D., Vice Chair, Kentucky Arts Council*

### THE EQUINE INDUSTRY'S IMPACT IN KENTUCKY

*Jill Stowe, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Director, UK Equine Programs, University of Kentucky*



Virginia (Atlantic Gateway: Partnering to Unlock the I-95 Corridor at \$165 million).

Given the delays and uncertainty associated with federal transportation and infrastructure funding, a number of states, such as Georgia, implemented their own initiatives to boost funds for this important purpose. After years of discussions and measures to generate additional revenue for transportation funding, in 2015, the Georgia General Assembly passed, and the governor signed into law, HB 170, the Transportation





## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Economic Development, Transportation & Cultural Affairs Committee elected Representative Brent Yonts, Kentucky, to serve as the Committee's chair, and Representative Jeanie Lauer, Missouri, to serve as the Committee's vice chair for 2016-2017.



Funding Act of 2015. Based on this law, the motor fuel tax levied on gasoline increased from 19.3 cents per gallon to 26 cents per gallon; the motor fuel tax levied on diesel increased from 21.3 cents per gallon to 29 cents per gallon (these taxes were levied on distributors and not retailers). In addition, there were increases in the hotel/motel fee, heavy vehicle impact fee and alternative vehicle impact fee. Based on these fee increases, Georgia generated \$832 million in additional revenue in fiscal year 2016 and is estimated to recoup an additional \$908 million in fiscal year 2017. Most importantly, the Georgia Constitution binds all motor tax revenue toward transportation and infrastructure, ensuring this revenue is a bona fide user fee and not a general tax. In addition, the 2015 legislation requires that all other fees (such as the hotel/motel fee) be appropriated for transportation-

specific purposes. If not, the funding mechanism for these fees automatically will be repealed and no longer collected.

## INGREDIENTS NECESSARY TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Given that states are the pivotal players in creating the appropriate environment for companies to thrive, Alabama's efforts remain worthy of additional examination. In a number of sectors, particularly in advanced manufacturing, Alabama has made impressive advancements. Specifically, the state has experienced significant success in automobiles (Mercedes, Honda, Toyota, Hyundai), aeronautics (Airbus, Sikorsky), nautical vessels (Austal), space technology (General Dynamics) and steel (ThyssenKrupp). In Alabama, economic development is refining and promoting a process of creating wealth through focusing intensely on recruitment; retaining and sustaining existing industries; promoting tourism; fostering retail and commercial development projects; and, importantly, fashioning an environment where entrepreneurs and incubators can flourish. Undergirding these initiatives is the emphasis that the state has placed on workforce development and the critical need to provide companies with a well-trained workforce, skilled and adept in 21st century manufacturing techniques.

## THE ARTS AND KENTUCKY: CATALYST FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

The Kentucky Arts Council has taken steps in the last few years to ensure the commonwealth's competitiveness in the 21st century marketplace. A key component of this approach is a focus on creativity. Innovation, distinctive design and effective communications can determine the success or failure of businesses and public policy, and Kentucky's creative

industry is increasingly seen as a critical piece of the puzzle for effective economic and community development. According to a 2014 report, employment in the creative industry represents 2.5 percent of Kentucky's overall employment. While the creative industry accounts for annual earnings of \$1.9 billion, collectively, the average wage of a creative worker is \$34,299. Additionally, about 38 percent of the establishments in Kentucky's creative segments are self-employed artists and designers. This number is many times larger than the proportion of self-employed establishments across all other industries. Given that businesses often look to relocate and expand their operations in creative and culturally vibrant communities, the Kentucky Arts Council initiated a number of projects and collaborations to promote this concept.

## THE EQUINE INDUSTRY'S IMPACT IN KENTUCKY

Kentucky is synonymous with horses from the Derby in Louisville to the myriad horse farms and related operations scattered across the commonwealth. The economic cluster created by horse farms radiates to multiple disciplines from equine health services, professional services, professional associations, farm-related services, transportation, tourism and equine-related businesses. According to the most recent study (2012), the total economic impact of the equine industry in the state amounted to \$2.99 billion; 40,655 jobs; and \$134 million in state income and sales taxes, a significant amount. The economic impact number includes contributions from breeding, competition, racing, recreation and other related activities. In terms of horse racings' contributions to state coffers, the annual number was \$12.6 million. In sum, the equine industry contributes substantially to the commonwealth economically, culturally and aesthetically.

# EDUCATION COMMITTEE SESSION SUMMARY



**Senator Dolores Gresham**  
Tennessee  
2015-2016 Chair

## EFFECTIVE TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Teacher Prep Review, prepared by the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ), is a biennial assessment of 2,400 elementary and secondary, undergraduate and graduate teacher preparations programs. The 2014 edition of the Review found that, of the 1,668 programs ranked by NCTQ's key standards, only 26 elementary programs and 81 secondary programs were exemplary. Meanwhile, 17 states and the District of Columbia were without a highly ranked elementary or secondary education teacher preparation program. Elementary programs continue to be far weaker than their secondary counterparts, with 70 percent more elementary programs scoring low. However, the report found that the top elementary and secondary teacher preparation programs reside in the South: Dallas Baptist University in Texas and Lipscomb University in Tennessee, respectively.

Similarly, Bellwether Education Partners recently delved into teacher preparation programs, with an analysis of state efforts to link teachers to the programs that prepared them. Focusing on 11 states, including five SLC member states, Bellwether found that states are relying on outcomes of graduates to assess their

## SUNDAY, JULY 10

### EFFECTIVE TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

*Rob Rickenbrode*, Senior Director, Teacher Preparation Strategies, National Council on Teacher Quality, Washington, D.C.

*Ashley LiBetti Mitchel*, Senior Analyst, Bellwether Education Partners, Washington, D.C.

*Ann Larson*, Chair, Advisory Council of State Representatives, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; Dean and Professor, Department of Middle and Secondary Education, College of Education and Human Development, University of Louisville

## MONDAY, JULY 11

### STUDENT SUCCESS IN POSTSECONDARY SYSTEMS

*Tristan Denley*, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Tennessee Board of Regents

### UPDATE ON THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

*William Knudsen*, Education Policy Advisor, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

*Simone Hardeman-Jones*, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Education Committee re-elected Senator Dolores Gresham, Tennessee, to serve as the Committee's chair, and Representative Tom Dickson, Georgia, to serve as the Committee's vice chair for 2016-2017.

teacher preparation programs. States that were early adopters of the outcomes-based approach encountered a series of technical and political challenges, including the identification of highest-value outcomes; determination of measures; design of a system that differentiates programs by performance; and targets for appropriate interventions to improve program quality. Each state handled these issues differently, with pros, cons, and value judgments attached to each decision. Cumulatively, states considering the adoption of an outcomes-based approach to teacher



preparation program evaluation have many options and may adapt guidelines, targets, and evaluation systems to their particular circumstances.

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) is the leading voice on educator preparation, representing more than 800 postsecondary institutions with educator preparation programs dedicated to high-quality, evidence-based preparation that assures educators are ready to teach all learners. In that



role, AACTE promotes: 1) unification of the profession around a common accreditation to standardize higher education's preparation of P-12 educators; 2) integration of 21st century skills into teacher preparation, which helps students compete globally; and 3) instilling in teacher candidates the knowledge of digital tools that enable them to communicate effectively, collaborate on projects, solve problems, think critically, and innovate. Per AACTE, states seeking to alleviate a shortage in properly prepared teachers have several options, such as teacher residency programs; recruitment of talented pre-service students with the promise of loan forgiveness; alignment of teacher production and workforce needs; high program

admission standards; adoption of a clinical model of teacher preparation; and continuation of development and study of alternative pathways to teaching.

## STUDENT SUCCESS IN POSTSECONDARY SYSTEMS

Developed by K-12 and higher education faculty, Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support (SAILS) integrates the Tennessee Board of Regents' (TBR) Learning Support math competencies into the high school senior year in a blended learning environment, resulting in students being able to begin college in credit-bearing courses. The program utilizes a facilitated hybrid instructional model, which has been demonstrated as the most effective method of engaging students with their work and increasing their success rate. Meanwhile, a new approach to remediation is boosting the number of students successfully completing their first college-level English and math courses in the Tennessee Board of Regents system.

Known as a "co-requisite" approach, the new model places students in supplemental learning support classes while also enrolling them in their first credit-bearing courses. In a 2014 pilot program conducted at nine of the state's 13 community colleges, the system saw completion rates for college math jump from 12 percent to

61 percent, and from 31 percent to 64 percent for English. After the pilot's success, TBR took the co-requisite model systemwide, implementing it at all 13 community colleges and six universities. After one semester, the numbers still were strong, with 51 percent completing their first college math course and 58 percent completing English.

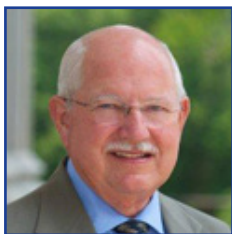
## UPDATE ON THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

During the past seven years, the United States has made important progress for its students, from higher standards in nearly every classroom to the nation's highest historical graduation rate. While there is a lot of work yet to do, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is seen as a step forward and beneficial for all students. Congress strategically crafted ESSA as a set of new federal policies that will be phased in. This approach gives the U.S. Department of Education time to provide guidance and technical assistance, and to regulate. It also ensures that the Department, states, and districts have time and capacity to consult with stakeholders and to update systems to reflect the requirements in the new law.

Since ESSA was signed into law, the Department announced four key focus areas for guidance and comments from state and local stakeholders: 1) student assessments; 2) Title I, Part A, requiring federal education funding be used to supplement, not supplant, state and local funds; 3) Title I, Part B's innovative assessment demonstration authority, which will allow a number of states to pilot new approaches to statewide assessments; and 4) accountability, including components of state plans and data reporting. The Department continues to seek input on other areas where guidance and technical assistance would be helpful, and does not plan to propose regulations on any other areas of the new law this year.



# ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE SESSION SUMMARY



**Representative**  
**William "Bill" E. Sandifer III**  
South Carolina  
*2015-2016 Chair*

## CLEARING THE AIR: AN UPDATE ON THE CLEAN POWER PLAN

On February 9, a 5-4 majority of the U.S. Supreme Court issued a nationwide stay, blocking implementation of the Clean Power Plan until litigation over the legality of the Plan has concluded. The litigation includes nearly 150 opponents, including 28 states, industries and labor groups. Opponents allege the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency illegally issued duplicative rules for coal-fired power plants, infringed upon states' rights, intruded on federal energy regulators' jurisdiction, and does not have the authority to force states to transform their energy systems to favor certain sources of electricity. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit will hear oral arguments in late September 2016 and appeals to the U.S. Supreme Court are expected.

For many, the U.S. Supreme Court's decision to block implementation of the Clean Power Plan signaled doom, given the likelihood that the Court also will provide the final ruling on its legality. However, the death of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia in February 2016 dramatically changed the legal landscape, since the fate of the Clean Power Plan now may hinge on his vacant seat. If a new justice has not been appointed

## SUNDAY, JULY 10

### CLEARING THE AIR: AN UPDATE ON THE CLEAN POWER PLAN

*Joel Visser, Associate, Sidley Austin, LLP, Washington, D.C.*

### LEGAL CHALLENGES TO WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES

*LaJuana S. Wilcher, Partner, English Lucas Priest & Owsley, LLP, Kentucky*

### CYBER SECURITY AND NUCLEAR POWER

*William R. Gross, Senior Project Manager, Cyber Security,  
Nuclear Energy Institute, Washington, D.C.*

## MONDAY, JULY 11

### LEGISLATIVE ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION



and confirmed by the time the case makes it to the U.S. Supreme Court, the justices could split 4-4, which would uphold the D.C. Circuit's decision. If the case is heard by a full Court, a ruling on the regulation could depend on which party nominates the next justice.

## LEGAL CHALLENGES TO WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES

In May 2015, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) finalized the Clean Water Rule, also known as WOTUS, defining the scope of the "waters of the United States" subject to federal regulatory jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act.

Almost immediately, legal challenges were filed in federal appeals and district courts across the country. In October 2015, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit issued a nationwide stay against the enforcement of the Rule and, in February 2016, concluded that it has jurisdiction to hear challenges to the Rule. The decision came in the form of three separate opinions, as each judge had a different interpretation of the law. Two judges concluded that the Appellate Court has jurisdiction over the legal challenges to the Rule, while the third judge concluded it does not. The case before the 6th Circuit is the result of consolidated challenges from 31 states, agricultural groups and





## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Energy & Environment Committee elected Representative Lynn Smith, Georgia, to serve as the Committee's chair, and Senator Ed Emery, Missouri, to serve as the Committee's vice chair for 2016-2017.

industry groups that claim the Rule exceeds EPA's constitutional authority. The 6th Circuit will hold briefings in September 2016.

Most of the challenges filed in district courts have been thrown out or placed on hold pending the 6th Circuit's decision. A separate case raising the issue of jurisdiction also

was appealed to the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta, Georgia. The 11th Circuit put its case on hold pending the 6th Circuit's ruling.

## CYBER SECURITY AND NUCLEAR POWER

As states in the SLC move to increase nuclear generation capacity, policymakers are beginning to reconsider the relationship between nuclear power plants and their dependence on externally linked computer systems. A report from the Nuclear Threat Initiative warns that access systems at nuclear power plants could be compromised, allowing thieves to wreak havoc or steal nuclear material.

From 2002-04, the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) formed a task force on cyber security, completed a cyber security assessment pilot program and developed a cyber security self-assessment method. These early actions positioned NEI as a leader in the field of nuclear cyber security. Their Cyber Security Program for Power Reactors has been fully endorsed by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). As an additional precautionary measure, nuclear energy generators tightly control the onsite use of portable media, such as USB drives, laptops, cellphones and external hard drives, giving nuclear energy security personnel better protection against a Stuxnet-like intrusion.

Nuclear energy stakeholders agree that the nation's nuclear energy generators are safe from both internal and external cyber threats. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office of Cyber and Infrastructure Analysis report from October 2015 asserts "nuclear power reactors have comprehensive safeguards that protect control system safety and security and prevent the misuse of portable media and portable equipment from circumventing these protections."

While important steps have been taken by the NRC to protect this vital power source, the cyber risk to nuclear power facilities requires constant evaluation and response, particularly as the industry increases its reliance on digital systems and as cyber-criminal activity continues its relentless rise.

## LEGISLATIVE ROUNDTABLE

The Legislative Roundtable highlights important energy and environmental legislation taken up in the Southern region during legislative sessions, with members briefing the Committee on measures undertaken in their respective states.

# FISCAL AFFAIRS & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE SESSION SUMMARY



**Senator Roman Prezioso**  
West Virginia  
2015-2016 Chair

## COMMUTER AND LIGHT RAIL SYSTEMS IN THE SLC STATES: RECENT TRENDS

In the early years of the 21st century, a number of SLC states began expanding commuter and light rail projects. Georgia and Virginia are two such states. In Georgia, there is renewed focus on expanding transit options not only in the city of Atlanta, but also in the neighboring counties of Clayton, Cobb and Gwinnett. Given that metropolitan Atlanta is a “young” locale in terms of millennial and generation X populations, there is heightened attention for increased transit-oriented development. The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA), the ninth largest transit system in the country, currently is funded solely by a 1 percent sales tax levied in the city of Atlanta, Clayton, Dekalb and Fulton counties. As businesses look to relocate and expand to metropolitan Atlanta, while concurrently attracting millennials to their workforce, policymakers have become increasingly aware that expanding MARTA’s service is critical. Consequently, during the 2016 legislative session, the General Assembly enacted SB 369, which authorizes a referendum in the city of Atlanta (in either November 2016 or 2017) to allow voters to decide on a half-cent sales tax increase to generate funds for this expansion.

**SUNDAY, JULY 10**  
**COMMUTER AND LIGHT RAIL SYSTEMS IN THE SLC STATES: RECENT TRENDS**  
*Senator Brandon Beach, Georgia*  
*Delegate Ronald Villanueva, Virginia*

**MONDAY, JULY 11**  
**PUBLIC PENSIONS: TRENDS FROM THE SLC STATES**  
*Representative Barry Ivey, Louisiana*  
*Representative Stephen Ross, North Carolina*  
*Douglas Offerman, Senior Director, Fitch Ratings, New York*

## NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC TRENDS

*William R. Emmons, Assistant Vice President and Economist,  
Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Missouri*

**TAX CREDITS, DEDUCTIONS AND EXEMPTIONS: MAKING THEM WORK FOR STATES**  
*Josh Goodman, Officer, The Pew Charitable Trusts, Washington, D.C.*

Virginia has a long history of providing multiple transit options to its residents and continues to explore additional ways to enhance this transportation mode. Not only do three of the 75 largest transit agencies in the country operate in Virginia, the Metrorail system (shared with the District of Columbia and Maryland) is the nation’s second most heavily used rail transit system. The lead agency charged with increasing the provision of public transportation services throughout the commonwealth is the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT); in fiscal year 2017, the agency’s budget was \$733.3 million. In the upcoming years, DRPT expects to work on multiple transit initiatives that range from transit feasibility and regional improvement studies to major construction or expansion projects with the goal of expanding or improving transportation choices in Virginia. Projects include bus and MetroRail extensions on Route 1; increased use of High Occupancy Vehicle and High Occupancy Toll lanes on I-95/395; more transit options on I-66; Dulles Corridor MetroRail extension; and expanding the Norfolk Light Rail.



## PUBLIC PENSIONS: TRENDS FROM THE SLC STATES

Public pensions continue to be one of the most vexing fiscal issues confronting every state and local government in the country. Louisiana continues to explore mechanisms to bolster the funding position of its four state retirement systems: teachers, school employees, state employees and state police. Some of the measures involve requiring state systems to pre-fund administrative costs through explicit inclusion in contribution rate calculations; introducing a defined benefit/defined contribution hybrid plan for new state employees;





## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Fiscal Affairs & Government Operations Committee elected Representative Eric Johnson, Texas, to serve as the Committee's chair, and Representative Penny Houston, Georgia, to serve as the Committee's vice chair for 2016-2017.

identifying and utilizing new funding sources to increase the rate at which existing system debt is liquidated; establishing a separate account for excess contributions that can be used to help stabilize employer contribution rates; and ensuring that future pension costs are split more evenly between the employee and taxpayers.

North Carolina's pension system, currently valued at approximately \$90 billion, ranks in the top five states in terms of funding. In 2014, the system was 94 percent funded, with lawmakers appropriating the actuarially recommended amount in 76 out of the last 77 years. About half of average contributions to the system emerge from employees. In an effort to consolidate the system's funding position, policymakers have initiated a series of actions since 2008, including increasing employer and employee contributions, enacting a contribution rate stabilization policy and initiating minimal benefit changes and cost-of-living allowance changes. North Carolina, like the entire country, faces challenges in the form of higher life expectancy among retirees and unrealistic investment return assumptions.

Credit rating agencies continue to pay attention to the financial position of state pensions in their rating

decisions. In fact, rating changes have occurred in a number of states as a result of the funding position of their pension plans. Nevertheless, rating agencies maintain that a vast majority of governments are able to effectively respond to pension challenges, given their ability to raise revenue and enact other policy changes. In terms of major trends, while the contribution rates for major plans are improving, they still remain inadequate: in 2014, 53 percent of all state pension plans received 100 percent of their annual required contribution, an increase from the 42 percent that did so in 2011. Demographic erosion, with the declining ratio of active employees to retirees, continues to pose challenges.

## NATIONAL AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC TRENDS

The national economic outlook for 2016 includes a forecast of modest economic growth with some downside risks (including economic turbulence and sluggish growth globally amidst diminishing demand domestically), tame inflation and an environment of historically low interest rates. For the SLC states, while the national outlook applies, it is coupled with the region's strengths that include relatively rapid population growth and a low cost of living, particularly in housing. As a negative,

the most serious economic challenge confronting SLC states relate to education outcomes. For enhanced growth prospects, SLC states need to see advancements in education standards and workforce development opportunities. The most striking conclusion about the U.S. economy is the forecast from the Federal Reserve that economic growth will hover around 2 percent for the foreseeable future; this new normal is a remarkable departure from previous periods when growth rate averages were much higher.

## TAX CREDITS, DEDUCTIONS AND EXEMPTIONS: MAKING THEM WORK FOR STATES

There are two key steps that policymakers can introduce to enhance the efficacy of the assorted incentives states provide to corporations: (1) regularly evaluate the economic and fiscal results of these tax incentive programs; and (2) ensure that the fiscal costs of tax incentives are predictable, so they do not cause budget challenges. With these steps, policymakers can make subtle changes to greatly increase their return on investment; identify programs that are working well, so the state can invest in them with confidence; repeal or replace ineffective or obsolete incentives; and maintain a more constructive conversation about incentives with an array of stakeholders. In recent years, an increasing number of states have begun routinely gathering high-quality data on the costs of incentives as a key part of their operations.

# HUMAN SERVICES & PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE SESSION SUMMARY



**Representative Joni Jenkins**  
Kentucky  
2015-2016 Chair

## **PRESCRIPTION OPIOID AND HEROIN EPIDEMIC**

States across America face the growing and evolving threat of opioid and heroin abuse. In an effort to tackle this public health crisis, states have begun implementing a combination of policies focused on treatment, prevention and enforcement, including increasing access to anti-overdose medication; promoting legal protections for individuals who provide assistance during emergencies; encouraging syringe exchange programs; and exploring treatment alternatives to incarceration. States faced with a continuous inflow of heroin and other opioids, particularly highly potent synthetic variants such as fentanyl, must identify robust solutions in order to successfully bring this epidemic under control.

Among SLC member states, Kentucky has been hit particularly hard by heroin and opioid abuse. Several pieces of legislation passed by the Legislature, such as HB 1 in 2012 and HB 217 in 2013, have sought to curb the proliferation of opioid prescriptions throughout the state, thereby reducing levels of addiction and the thousands of drug-related hospitalizations and deaths that occur annually. The passage of these bills established more stringent regulations of pain clinics in Kentucky and set restrictions on prescribers and dispensers of controlled

## **SUNDAY, JULY 10**

### **PRESCRIPTION OPIOID AND HEROIN EPIDEMIC**

*John Tilley*, Secretary, Justice and Public Safety Cabinet, Kentucky

*Van Ingram*, Executive Director, Office of Drug Control Policy, Kentucky

*Robert Childs*, Executive Director, North Carolina Harm Reduction

Coalition Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women

*Representative Helena N. Moreno*, Louisiana

*Claire M. Renzetti, Ph.D.*, Judi Conway Patton Endowed Chair for Studies of

Violence Against Women; Professor and Chair of Sociology, University of Kentucky

## **MONDAY, JULY 11**

### **DIABETES IN SLC STATES**

*Dr. Philip A. Kern*, Director, Center for Clinical and

Translational Science, University of Kentucky

*Dominique Wilkins*, Vice President of Basketball Operations, Atlanta Hawks



substances. The results have been encouraging: prescriptions of all controlled substances for the period July 2014 - July 2015 were down approximately 5 percent compared to the same period in 2011 - 2012.

Part of the solution also lies in combating the selling and distribution of heroin. As a result of Kentucky SB 192, those caught trafficking heroin face stiff penalties. Anyone who sells up to two grams of heroin faces

a Class "D" felony, which requires one to five years in prison, 50 percent of which must be served before parole eligibility. Those selling two grams up to 100 grams face five to 10 years in prison, while those trafficking in more than 100 grams can expect to serve between 10 to 20 years in prison.

Equally important are treatment initiatives aimed at supporting individuals with ongoing addiction issues, such as increased access to the anti-





## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Human Services & Public Safety Committee elected Senator Doug Overbey, Tennessee, to serve as the Committee's chair, and Senator Katrina Shealy, South Carolina, to serve as the Committee's vice chair for 2016-2017.



South Carolina. Meanwhile, the highest rates of reported forcible rape are in Alaska, Arkansas, Michigan, New Mexico and South Dakota.

Countering such disturbing numbers will not be easy, but states have begun to act. In Louisiana, where more than 5,000 women experience domestic violence annually, several important pieces of legislation have been passed. In 2014, SB 291 authorized punitive or exemplary damages for serious bodily injury or severe mental and emotional distress caused by wanton and reckless disregard for safety. Also enacted in 2014, SB 292 provides victims of domestic abuse the option of an immediate divorce, waiving a 180-day waiting period from the time a protective order is issued until the court can grant a divorce.

Other successful measures enacted in Louisiana that can be replicated elsewhere to help victims include prohibiting firearm possession during the duration of protective orders; barring firearm possession for 10 years after completion of sentences for domestic abuse battery; expanding transmission of protective orders to state registries and local law enforcement; creating domestic violence prevention commissions; and improving treatment for victims.

## DIABETES IN SLC STATES

The costs associated with managing diabetes are staggering. According

overdose medication, naloxone, and syringe-exchange programs. In North Carolina, naloxone has reversed nearly 3,200 opioid overdoses over the past three years, while syringe-exchange programs have provided a range of social services for addicts and helped prevent the spread of diseases such as HIV and Hepatitis C.

## DOMESTIC ABUSE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women impact families across America. Nationally, 20 people per minute are victims of violence by an intimate partner, one in three female murder victims are killed by an intimate partner, and one in five women will be raped at some point in their lifetime. Among the states with the highest rates of females murdered by men are Alaska, Louisiana, New Mexico, Nevada and

to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 29 million people in the country have diabetes, while an additional 85 million have prediabetes. Altogether, the direct and indirect annual costs of diabetes are more than \$320 billion, and there are signs it may become even more severe – and more expensive – in the years ahead. Of the two variants of diabetes, type 1 and type 2, a disproportionately large number of cases – roughly 90 percent – are diagnosed as type 2. Multiple factors contribute to the prevalence of type 2 diabetes, but medical professionals are in agreement that an explosion in obesity rates caused by unhealthy lifestyles is one of the driving causes behind the tripling of diabetes cases during the past two decades.

Combating diabetes will require better overall lifestyle choices among the entire population, including healthier diets, more exercise, weight loss programs, and effective medications. This will be particularly important among SLC states, as the region continues to experience relatively high levels of obesity. Without such measures, millions more will be diagnosed with diabetes and the complications that come with it, including many severe chronic conditions such as blindness, kidney disease, nerve damage, amputation, and a range of cardiovascular diseases. From a fiscal perspective, too, the costs will be onerous if diabetes is not checked. According to the American Diabetes Association, the total annual costs of diabetes for all SLC states is approximately \$123 billion.

# STAFF WORKSHOP SUMMARY



**Marty Garrity**  
Director  
Bureau of Legislative Research  
Arkansas  
*2015-2016 Chair, SLC Legislative  
Service Agency Directors Group*

## MEDICAID EXPANSION UPDATE

In 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) requirement that states enroll in an expansion of their Medicaid program or lose all of their federal Medicaid funding was unconstitutionally coercive. The Court ruled that states could voluntarily participate in Medicaid expansion, but could not be punished for not participating. This ruling made Medicaid expansion optional for states. Consequently, each state is able to negotiate their own Medicaid expansion terms with the federal government via a waiver. The federal government will pay 100 percent of the cost of expanding Medicaid in a state until the end of 2016. Starting in 2017, the federal government's contribution will gradually decrease and, by 2020, the federal government will provide only 90 percent of the funding.

In 2014, three SLC member states, Arkansas, Kentucky, and West Virginia, began operating an expanded Medicaid program to provide coverage for adults with an income of up to 138 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

Arkansas negotiated a unique agreement with the federal government, using a Section 1115 waiver to allow the state to design its own version of Medicaid expansion. Arkansas's

## MEDICAID EXPANSION UPDATE

*Matt Salo*, Executive Director, National Association of Medicaid Directors, Washington, D.C.

## SUPREME COURT UPDATE

*Lisa Soronen*, Executive Director, State and Local Legal Center, Washington, D.C.

## MEET THE NEW DIRECTORS

*David Byerman*, Director, Legislative Research Commission, Kentucky

*Paul Coble*, Legislative Services Officer, General Assembly, North Carolina

*Gwennetta Tatum*, Legislative Services Director, House of Representatives, Mississippi

“private option” allows Arkansas residents who would qualify for Medicaid to purchase private health insurance through the health insurance marketplace. The state uses Medicaid expansion funds, provided by the federal government, to subsidize these private insurance purchases.

Kentucky opted for a traditional Medicaid expansion in 2014, but is now seeking a Section 1115 waiver in order to renegotiate the terms of its expansion. If successful, Kentucky would be the first state to transition from a traditional Medicaid expansion under the ACA to a waiver system.

West Virginia was one of five states to employ an auto-enrollment method recommended by the federal government called “administrative transfer.” State officials sent letters to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program enrollees and the parents of children covered by Medicaid notifying them of their potential eligibility for Medicaid. More than 70,000 West Virginia residents signed up for Medicaid as a result of this outreach.

## SUPREME COURT UPDATE: A BRIEFING FROM THE STATE AND LOCAL LEGAL CENTER

Handing down a number of recent groundbreaking and controversial decisions, such as those pertaining to



redistricting, immigration, and affirmative action, the U.S. Supreme Court has been the source of much political and legal discussion during its 2015-2016 term.

The Obama Administration's Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) program, announced in 2014, allows certain undocumented immigrants who have lived in the United States for five years, and either came here as children or already have children who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents, to lawfully stay and work temporarily in the United States. The Court split 4-4 in *United States v. Texas* on whether the DAPA program violated federal law. As a result, the 5th Circuit's nationwide temporary stay of the program remains in effect.





In *Fisher v. University of Texas* at Austin, the Court ruled 4-3 that the University of Texas at Austin's (UT Austin) race-conscious admissions program is constitutional. According to Texas's Top Ten Percent Plan, the top 10 percent of Texas high school graduates automatically are admitted to UT Austin, filling up to 75 percent of the class. Other students are admitted based on a combination of their grades, test scores, and "personal achievement index." Race is considered a factor in one of the two components of an applicant's "personal achievement index." UT Austin

denied admission to Abigail Fisher, a white Texan who did not graduate in the top 10 percent of her class. She sued claiming the University's use of race in admissions violates the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause.

In *United States Army Corp of Engineers v. Hawkes*, the Court ruled unanimously that an approved jurisdictional determination (JD) that property contains "waters of the United States" may be immediately reviewed in federal district court. According to the federal Clean Water

Act of 1972, "waters of the United States" (WOTUS) are federally regulated. Property owners may seek an approved JD from the U. S. Army Corp of Engineers definitively stating whether such waters are present or absent on a particular parcel of land. Based on the Administrative Procedures Act, judicial review may be sought only from final agency actions. Per *Bennett v. Spear* (1997), agency action is final when it marks the consummation of the agency's decision-making process and when legal consequences flow from the action. The Court concluded that an approved JD is a final agency action subject to court review because it meets both conditions laid out in *Bennett*.

## MEET THE NEW DIRECTORS

To provide a perspective on the changing role of legislative staff and agency administrators, a panel of three newly hired directors provided insights into these complex state agencies.

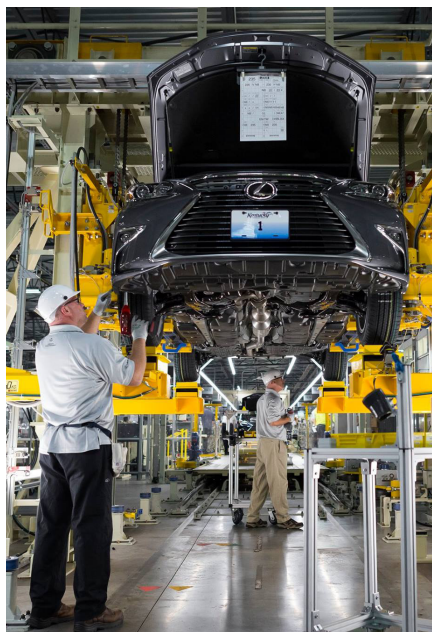
Legislative service agency directors oversee departments that can include bill drafting; legal, fiscal and general research; staff assistance for legislative committees and task forces; and computer and technology support. Directors assist legislators and their staff by providing factual, non-partisan information on a variety of general topics and on the increasingly technical and scientific basis of public policy. Staff answer questions and gather data to help legislators as they prepare legislation or respond to inquiries. Legislative service agency directors also are challenged to integrate emerging technology to better disseminate information, maintain institutional knowledge and recruit and retain top talent in an environment where public pension plans, one of the biggest benefits for government employees, have become less attractive incentives.



# COMMITTEE TECHNICAL TOURS

## **TOYOTA MANUFACTURING** **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,** **TRANSPORTATION & CULTURAL AFFAIRS**

The SLC has been studying the economic impact of the automobile industry in the South for over 13 years. One of the oldest foreign automaker facilities in the country, Toyota's largest vehicle manufacturing plant in North America in Georgetown, Kentucky, produced the first American-made Camry in 1988. Nearly 10 million vehicles have rolled off Toyota's assembly line since then, where full-time employment is around 7,000 and investment tops \$5.9 billion. In addition to the Camry, America's best-selling car, Toyota Kentucky manufactures the Camry Hybrid, Avalon, Avalon Hybrid and Venza, and four-cylinder and V-6 engines. Beginning in late 2015, the plant began production of the first U.S.-assembled Lexus, adding 50,000 vehicles to its current annual capacity of 500,000 (engine production capacity: 600,000). Participants were given a detailed briefing on the plant's operations and taken on a guided tour of the facility.



## **UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY CENTER** **FOR APPLIED ENERGY RESEARCH**

### **AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Participants undertook a tour of the University of Kentucky Center for Applied Energy Research (CAER) to learn about CAER's research efforts and their newly constructed, high-performance laboratory. Researchers at CAER contribute to technically sound policies related to fossil fuel, renewable energy and energy storage. Research efforts are directed to coal beneficiation, utilization, and conversion process technologies; fuel use; coal combustion by-products; engineered fuels; biomass and biofuels; distributed solar energy; and electrochemical power sources. In addition

to the important research undertaken at CAER, the Center's newest laboratory, CAER 2, is LEED gold certified. Participants received briefings on key research being undertaken, a tour of CAER 2 highlighting the building's state-of-the-art laboratory designs, and learned about the Center's path to LEED certification.

## **UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY** **SPINDLETOP RESEARCH FARM** **AND ASHFORD STUD FARM** **ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT**

Highlighting some of Kentucky's most recognizable agricultural commodities, this tour featured site visits

to the University of Kentucky's Spindletop Research Farm and Ashford Stud Farm. The Spindletop Research Farm is located on 2,000 acres of prime farmland just north of Lexington. Participants learned about the cultivation of hemp and burley tobacco. The Ashford Stud Farm is home to some of the best young sires in America. The stallion roster is led by Giant's Causeway, whose achievements include three champion sire titles; a feat only achieved by three stallions since 1941. Participants had a close viewing of 2015 Triple Crown winner, American Pharoah, and learned about the daily operations on a stud farm.



# STATE TRANSFORMATION IN ACTION RECOGNITION (STAR) JUDGES PANEL



Dr. Christopher Colville, Superintendent of Education, Department of Corrections, Virginia;  
Cleon Ross II, Education Program Coordinator, Division of Education, Department of Corrections, Virginia



Nick Donohue, Deputy Secretary of  
Transportation, Virginia



## AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION ACCREDITATION PROJECT

In order to reduce recidivism, the Virginia Department of Corrections, Division of Education (VDOC, DOE) offers career and technical education (CTE) courses to inmates. These courses are designed to provide inmates with the skills required to succeed in today's workforce. In 2014, the VDOC, DOE received college accreditation for five CTE courses through the American Council on Education (ACE). For more than 30 years, colleges and universities have trusted ACE to provide reliable course equivalency information to facilitate credit award decisions. Virginia is the only state in the nation to offer college accredited courses to

its inmates. Research shows that ex-offenders who have acquired college credit while incarcerated have lower recidivism rates.

The ACE-accredited courses offered are business software applications, computer aided drafting, computer graphics and design, introduction to computers and print production. Upon release, ex-offenders may submit an accredited transcript to higher education institutions for potential transfer credit in a degree program. Based upon the initial success of the program, the VDOC, DOE plans to seek ACE accreditation for additional courses, including welding, HVAC, plumbing and masonry.

## SMART SCALE PROGRAM

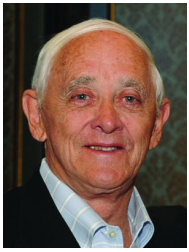
In 2014, Virginia became the first state to pass legislation establishing a scored ranking system to evaluate transportation projects based on project outcomes and across modes with their Smart Scale program legislation, which established a statewide prior-

itization process for transportation projects that improve the efficiency of the commonwealth's transportation network.

The Smart Scale legislation addressed concerns that the selection of transportation projects was based on politics, not objective data. Projects now are evaluated based on their benefits-relative costs, specifically the ease of congestion, improved accessibility to jobs, improved safety and economic development, transportation-efficient land use, and impact on the environment.

In June 2016, the Commonwealth Transportation Board approved \$1.7 billion in funding to build 163 transportation projects that were selected through the Smart Scale process. These projects are fully funded through all phases of project development and construction. The Virginia Department of Transportation has been working with other states that wish to replicate their success.

# CONFERENCE NOTES



## THOMAS B. MURPHY LONGEVITY OF SERVICE AWARD

**Senator Gerald O. Dial**, born in Delta, Alabama, is serving

his tenth term in the Alabama Legislature, having served two terms in the House and seven previous terms in the Senate, for an impressive 37 years of service.

He holds degrees from both West Alabama University and Jacksonville State University, and has done graduate work at Auburn University.

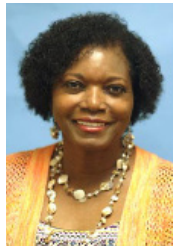
In the Alabama Senate, Senator Dial serves as chair of the Health and Human Services Committee; chair of Local Legislation Committee; and as a member of several other influential committees.

Senator Dial is a self-employed real estate developer and a retired brigadier general in the Alabama National Guard. He is president pro tempore of the Troy University Board of Trustees and belongs to several sports-oriented organizations. He lists his hobbies as hunting, fishing, and work.

Senator Dial and his wife, Faye, are the parents of two children: Melanie and Jason.

## CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

The SLC continues to provide an array of services to its legislative members and staff by providing the opportunity to earn Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credits for attending certified substantive sessions during the Annual Meeting. For more information regarding the annual meeting CLE accreditation, contact Roger Moore at [rmoore@csg.org](mailto:rmoore@csg.org), or the SLC office by calling (404) 633-1866.



## CARTER/HELLARD LEGISLATIVE STAFF AWARD

The Carter/Hellard Legislative Staff Award is presented to the individual who has demonstrated excellence and dedication in staffing service to state legislators in the South. **Ms. Estella Smith** is the recipient of the 2016 Award.

Ms. Smith started her service with the Arkansas Bureau of Legislative Research in 1978 as an administrative assistant. For 11 years, she served in various positions with the Bureau and, in 1989, became administrative assistant to the assistant director. In 1996, Ms. Smith obtained her bachelor's degree and became a legislative analyst with the Bureau.

After serving for five years as a constituency services analyst for the Arkansas Senate, Ms. Smith returned to the Bureau of Legislative Research in 2001. Since 2011, she has served as the administrator of the Committee Staff Section of the Bureau. Ms. Smith has an extensive knowledge of the legislative process, parliamentary procedures and personnel management.

## POLICY POSITIONS ADOPTED AT THE 70<sup>TH</sup> SLC ANNUAL MEETING

The Southern Legislative Conference adopted five policy positions at the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting:

1. Regarding Support for Bipartisan Efforts in Congress to Encourage Development of Nuclear Power Reactors
2. Supporting the Deployment of Advanced, Innovate Electric Transmission Technology
3. Encouraging Resource Conservation, Preservation and Recovery of Coal Combustion Products
4. Supporting the Development of Advanced Carbon Emission Reduction Technologies for Power Generation
5. Regarding the Cumulative Impacts of Future Environmental Protection Agency Regulations

To review these policy positions and those of previous years, please visit [www.slcatlanta.org/policy\\_positions/](http://www.slcatlanta.org/policy_positions/).

Policy Positions of the Southern Legislative Conference shall sunset the first day of the following Annual Meeting. The SLC collaborated with the CSG Washington, D.C. office to forward the positions to the proper authorities.

## COMPARATIVE DATA REPORTS

Comparative Data Reports (CDRs) are prepared annually by select SLC states' fiscal research departments. CDRs track a multitude of revenue sources and appropriations levels in Southern states and remain a useful tool to legislators and legislative staff alike in determining their respective state spending. The reports presented at the SLC Annual Meeting were:

- » **Adult Corrections** - *Monique Appeaning*, Legislative Fiscal Office, Louisiana
- » **Education** - *Hank Hager*, Senate, West Virginia
- » **Medicaid** - *Patrice Thomas*, Legislative Fiscal Office, Louisiana
- » **Transportation** - *John Snyder*, Legislative Research Commission, Kentucky

Comparative Data Reports are prepared under the auspices of the Conference's Fiscal Affairs & Government Operations Committee. Reports for 2016 and previous releases, dating back to 2000, are available through the SLC website at: [www.slcatlanta.org/Publications/](http://www.slcatlanta.org/Publications/).



# APPRECIATION

The Southern Legislative Conference extends special thanks to the following friends for their generous assistance with the general and substantive programs for our 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting.  
We are grateful for their continued support and interest in the Conference.

## SLC PROGRAM SPONSORS

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GlaxoSmithKline | HCA | LexisNexis | Merck  
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## KENTUCKY HOST STATE SPONSORS

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Kentucky Distillers' Association	University of Kentucky / UK HealthCare	Kentucky Association of Counties	Mountain Valley Pipeline
PARTNER		Kentucky Credit Union League	Perdue Farms
AEP - Kentucky Power		Kentucky Hospital Association	T-Mobile USA, Inc.
PLATINUM		Kentucky Optometric Association	VisitLEX
Altria Client Services	Kentucky Coal Association	Kentucky Legalize Kentucky Now	Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of Kentucky
City of Lexington	RAI Services Company	SUPPORTER	
Duke Energy Kentucky	UPS	American Pharmacy Services Corporation	Kentucky County Judge/Executive Association
GOLD		Babbage Cofounder	Kentucky Justice Association
AARP	Kentucky Highway Industries: Kentucky Association of Highway Contractors, Plantmix Asphalt Industry of Kentucky, Kentucky Crushed Stone Association	Chevron	Kentucky Malt Beverage Council
Anthem	MGM Resorts International	Commerce Lexington	Kentucky Medical Association
AT&T	Norton Healthcare	Cull & Hayden PSC	Kentucky Professional Fire Fighters
CVS Health	Passport Health Plan	Eli Lilly and Company	Kentucky School Boards Association
Genentech	Republic Services, Inc.	Enova International	Kentucky Society of CPAs
Kentucky Association of Electric Co-operatives: East Kentucky Power Co-operative and Big Rivers Electric Corporation	WellCare Health Plans	Goss Samford	KentuckyOne Health
SILVER		Greater Louisville Inc.	Lexmark International
Baptist Health	Kentucky Horse Park	Independent Insurance Agents of Kentucky	Louisville Convention & Visitors Bureau
Buffalo Trace Distillery	Kentucky League of Cities	Kentuckians for Better Transportation	Merck
Churchill Downs, Inc.	Kentucky Retail Federation	Kentucky Association of Manufacturers	National Association of Chain Drug Stores
Columbia Gas of Kentucky	Koch Companies Public Sector	Kentucky Association of Realtors	Owensboro Health
Comcast	Marathon Petroleum Corporation	Kentucky Beer Wholesalers Association	Procter & Gamble
CSX Corporation	McCarthy Strategic Solutions	Kentucky Blood Center	St. Elizabeth Healthcare
GlaxoSmithKline	Pharmaceutical Care	Kentucky Cable	Wells Fargo
Kentucky Beverage Association	Management Association	Telecommunications Association	Windstream Communications
Kentucky Chamber of Commerce	Phillips 66	Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts	
Kentucky County Clerks Association	RJ Corman	FRIENDS	
Kentucky Employers Mutual Insurance	State Farm Insurance	Allen County Scottsville Industrial Development Authority	Duplicator Sales & Service
Kentucky Farm Bureau	Swedish Match	Diageo	Kentucky Wineries Association
Kentucky Guild of Brewers	Toyota	Downtown Lexington Corporation	Mr. and Mrs. William Strong
BRONZE			Winchester-Clark County Tourism Commission
American Chemistry Council	Charter Communications	SPECIAL THANK YOU	
Advantage Capital Partners	Community Ventures Corporation	Kentucky Tourism, Arts & Heritage Cabinet: Kentucky Arts Council, Kentucky Artisan Center	Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service
AmeriHealth Caritas	Dart Container Corporation	Kentucky Department of Agriculture: Kentucky Proud Program, Kentucky Cattlemen's Association, Kentucky Pork Producers Association, Kentucky Corn Growers Association	Kentucky Beverage Association
Amgen	EQT Corporation	Gallrein Farms	National American Racing Academy
Anheuser-Busch	Express Scripts, Inc.	University of Kentucky	Garden Club of Frankfort
Atmos Energy Corporation	HCA	Wildcat Pulling Team	God's Pantry Food Bank
Big Ass Solutions	Home Builders Association of Kentucky		Commerce Lexington
Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees/Teamsters	ITG Brands		Office of Governor Matt Bevin
CareSource - Kentucky	Insurance Institute of Kentucky		Staff of the Kentucky Legislative Research Commission

# 70<sup>TH</sup> SLC ANNUAL MEETING HOST STATE

## HOST STATE COMMITTEE

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<b>Speaker</b> <b>Greg Stumbo</b>	Speaker Pro Tem Jody Richards Representative Rocky Adkins Representative Jeffrey Hoover	Representative Sannie Overly Representative Stan Lee	Representative Johnny Bell Representative Jim DeCesare
LOCAL HOST STATE COMMITTEE			
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<b>HOUSE</b>	Representative Robert Benvenuti III Representative George Brown, Jr.	Representative Kelly Flood Representative Ruth Ann Palumbo	Representative Susan Westrom

## DIRECTOR OF HOST STATE CONFERENCE PLANNING

Teresa Arnold, Deputy Director for Research, Legislative Research Commission

## HOST STATE VOLUNTEERS

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Suzanne Wilkins • Christina Williams • Rob Williams • Stewart Willis • Greg Woosley • Elise York • Ann Zimmer



# 2016-2017 CONFERENCE AND COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

## CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP



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Mississippi  
*Chair*



**Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard**  
Missouri  
*Chair Elect*



**Senate President Robert Stivers**  
Kentucky  
*Immediate Past Chair*

### AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT



**Representative Tom McKee**  
Kentucky  
*Chair*



**Senator Danny Verdin III**  
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